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March 1921

Tuesday 15th. Leave Melbourne, en route for Scone, to interview Mr H L White regarding a trip to [illegible] by [illegible], about which we have been corresponding for some time.

Wednesday 16th. Reach Sydney 12.30 p.m. After lunch I make enquiries re boats sailing [illegible] Thursday is. Cli Mare due to leave on 23rd & Kanowna on the 24th. [illegible] could not give me any definite information as to whether it would take a passenger or not. Call at [illegible] & Dunn & inspect some guns & rifles. Leave for Scone at 5.30 p.m.

Thursday 17th. Arrive at Scone about 3.30 am. Put up at Golden Fleece Hotel [illegible] & then take the coach for Belltrees, arriving there about midday. Met by [illegible] who informed me that Mr White was away at the Muswellbrook show & would not be back till evening. Spent the afternoon with Mr [illegible] in looking over some interesting skins [illegible] in Mr White's collection. Mr White returned about [illegible] p.m. & we decided to leave the discussion of the proposed trip till next morning.

Friday 18th. Arranged the details of the trip with Mr White, during the morning, Monday & again in the [illegible] in the [illegible] reaching there [illegible] in the afternoon. Put up at the hotel again as my train for Sydney does not leave till 11 45 pm. Turn in a little [illegible] up as I do not expect to [illegible] much during the journey to Sydney. 11 [illegible] pm. take the train for Sydney.

Saturday 19th. Arrive Sydney about [illegible] am. Cannot get accommodation in the City. Try the suburbs & get a room at Darlinghurst. Return to City & go to [illegible] & Dunn, there purchase Gun, Rifle, ammunition etc. Call at [illegible] for Photographic supplies & [illegible] them to be forwarded to me at Thursday Is. Call in at the Shipping offices & am told to call again on Monday afternoon. [illegible] at the G.P.O. & received a wire from W. J. Farquhar, that had been [illegible] there since March 2nd. Wire stated [illegible] Farquhar had left for Sydney, but did not give his address. Wire to Thursday Is [illegible].

Sunday 20th. Went for a [illegible] [illegible] Beach.

[illegible]day 21st. Received a wire giving Mr. Farquhar's address. Call there but found he had gone out for the day.

In the afternoon I called again at the shipping offices. Learned that the steamer would not be calling in at Thursday Is. this trip. There was a steamer similar to the Chi Maru, so booked it.

Call at Townes & Penn, and find that they cannot ship the ammunition, so will take it along with me. Ask them to post the Gun & Rifle to me at Thursday Is., as they tell me it will be quite safe to do so.

Tuesday 22nd. Call in to see Farquhar, as I want to get some information from him regarding boats for hire at T. I. He offered me one of his boats for £20 per month but I did not close with him, as [illegible] till I reach T. I. & have a look around.

Wednesday 23rd. Came on board the Chi Maru & sail at noon. [illegible] on the wharf.

Thursday 24th nothing of note

Friday 25th Call in at Brisbane. Have got a very severe cold. Bring my cloth

Saturday 26th. [illegible] 2.30 a.m. nothing of note. Cold very bad.

Sunday 27th Nothing of note.

Monday 28th. Called at Townsville 9 p.m. [illegible] few passengers off in a small launch. Sea a bit rough, launch had some trouble in getting alongside. Left again about 10.30 p.m.

Tuesday 29th. The sea a bit rough & hazy. Night rainy and [illegible] warm.

Wednesday 30th. Weather rough & rainy. [illegible] anchor & sail about 10.30 a.m.

Thursday 31st Reached Thursday Island about 3 p.m. but did not get alongside jetty until 5 p.m. Stay at Imperial Hotel

April

Friday 1st Call at Post Office, get letter from Port Darwin containing Permit to collect Birds & Eggs in Northern Territory. Parcels did not come with the [illegible]. They will not get here for about 8 days.

Call on Bert Bridgen(?) to get some information re hiring boats. Bert did not know of any I could get at a reasonable price, the boats that were laid up were all Pearling luggers & the owners would want them £20 to £25 per month for them. Bert reckoned a fair price for a lugger to be from £12 to £15 per month without insurance.

Go & see Mrs Rodriguez owner of the Gerty(?). This boat was on the slips & [illegible] to [illegible] me. Go & see the [illegible] was a fine boat but [illegible] repairs & equipment were required. I asked her to let the matter stand over for a couple of days as I had not yet decided to take the boat.

Heard of a young chap, Jack Border(?), whom I may be able to get for a mate. Set out to look for him but he was out of town.

Saturday 2nd. See Bowen, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] he was leaving [illegible] Sydney in [illegible] few days time. He [illegible] accepted an [illegible] [illegible] then there [illegible] could not come with [illegible] He told me [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible], but [illegible] [illegible] he thought would [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] who [illegible] had a vessel [illegible] [illegible] would suit me.
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] at work repairing [illegible]

Sunday 3rd. See [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] his [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] mate. Said [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in [illegible] time, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] job.

Monday 4th. [illegible] [illegible]

Tuesday 5th. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] afternoon [illegible] [illegible] me, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] mistake. I will not say what [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] on the lugger a £4 per week to him to come as mate, for a period of 6 months. Said he would accept offer if I also insured the boat. So I closed with him.

Wednesday 6th. Put the dinghy up on the beach for repairs to rudder & to clean the copper.
Consult with Cohen re. the best boys for a crew & the number required to handle the boat in event of rough weather. He said we would want 4 boys & that we would very likely be able to get them from Moa Is.

Thursday 7th. Banjoi came in from Moa with some boys who had permits to sign on as crew, about midday. Cohen & I picked out 4 & asked them if they would be willing to sign on. The boys they promised to let me know later on in the afternoon. About 4 pm they came along & said they would sign on; one did not have a permit & would have to go back to Moa to get it; & he would not be able to get back from there for about a fortnight; as he was the best boy of the 4 I told him I would go out for him next week. It is the custom to give the boys a small present when they agree to sign on, so I gave them 2/6 each & told them to come along at 10 am next morning as the shipping office was now closed for the day. The boys names are. Malachi. Bilo Gela. Gagai Ware & Kosia Tare, last named has to return to Moa for a permit

Friday 8th. The boys turned up at 10 am & I took them along to the Shipping office to take out a set of Articles for the boat & after the 2 boys had their names sanctioned by the Division officer I signed them on. The shipping clerk told me I would have to enter into a bond of £100 & get a friend to go as surety, as a guarantee that I would bring the boys back at the end of the term of service, as I was taking them outside the limit of territorial waters. Got things fixed up & sent the boys along to the boat & set them to work & cooking supper. Night try to get the boat off the beach, but found that we were caught by the neap tides.

Saturday 9th. Arrange with Quarantine officer to fumigate the boat. One time you were allowed to do this yourself. He came along & fixed up the fumigation after lunch.
Brought down from north shipping mail & parcels. On opening up the parcel containing the gun I found that it was badly damaged; the right barrel was dented & the fore end piece split. Will have to return it. It was sent in a light card-board box & the barrels were not protected with slats of wood. Capt. Ewald, Prince one of the Torres Straits pilots, who

is going to Sydney on a passing [illegible] in the morning; promised to take the gun back to [illegible] & [illegible] for me. Heard it [illegible]. Been a pretty [illegible] after about their methods of [illegible] guns per post.

Sunday 10th. Capt. Bruce takes [illegible] a letters south.
[illegible] & I draw up a list of stores required for 3 months of the trip.
Decide to cut down the meat supply 2/3rds as we should be able to always get a plentiful supply of fresh fish & game

Monday 11th. Give the list of stores to [illegible] Ltd. They will not be able to let me have them until after the [illegible] arrives from south on the 12th, as they are out of some of the [illegible] required. All the other [illegible] in the town are also short of supplies & are also waiting the arrival of the [illegible] & [illegible]
Go along & see [illegible] who owns a double barrel 20 bore gun. I explain my predicament & damage to my gun & having to return it, to Sydney for repairs, & ask if he will let me have his gun. [illegible] that he would as the gun was in his [illegible] end house on Prince of Wales island. He would

[illegible] without sail

[illegible] 12th, [illegible] this morning, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] which [illegible] get the boat off.

Thursday 1[illegible]th [illegible]

[illegible] for Mr [illegible] main.

[illegible] wind. After we [illegible] Wednesday [illegible], we got the full [illegible] of wind & sea. It was not long before I got very seasick, & continued so till we dropped anchor at [illegible] at 9 pm. Boat touched the [illegible] going in to the anchorage. Very rough at night [illegible] did not get any sleep.

Friday 15th Go ashore about 7 am & pay my respects to Mr & Mrs [illegible] & was invited to stay [illegible] the day as the weather was rougher than yesterday. Mr [illegible] has been collecting [illegible], [illegible] is [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible]ical Institute, [illegible]sville. [illegible]

has not seen any sign of the [illegible] [illegible] since I left there.
[illegible] [illegible] pretty [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] as I was [illegible] [illegible] after my [illegible] [illegible].

Saturday 16th. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to sign on with me. [illegible] [illegible] back in T. I. about 11 a.m. [illegible] [illegible] taken off [illegible] [illegible] the sea is not quite so rough. Anchor in [illegible] about 1.00 p.m. [illegible] a bit off colour [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] during the trip but did not get sick.

Sunday 17th. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] find that [illegible] is away [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] is.

Monday 18th. Go along to Shipping office & sign on [illegible] there. Get stores on board unpack & check them. Shortage of 1 doz butter. Fill water tank at jetty.
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] along. I wanted [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] but he said he could not get away from his work, said that he would [illegible] [illegible] tomorrow [illegible] [illegible] would go over with me then & get the [illegible] [illegible] there was nothing else for it but to wait. I [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] on the trip in the morning.

Tuesday 19th. Morning out a few articles that I had overlooked. [illegible] I visited over Mr Collins house & he put me [illegible]. It is the one I saw on my trip [illegible] & is [illegible] in good order. Collis told me that he [illegible] who came from Barbados.

Wednesday 20th. [illegible] 10 a.m. Light S E breeze. [illegible] in passage [illegible] about 100 miles [illegible] as it is [illegible] [illegible] light [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] at [illegible] a few miles [illegible] is [illegible] [illegible] make [illegible] sailing [illegible]. [illegible] during the day.

Thursday 21st. [illegible] light S E breeze, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] go ashore & have a hunt round. 100 yds inland, a belt of good scrub extends along parallel with the beach to the north [illegible] were seen. [illegible] Butcher birds heard calling. Friar birds, Yellow-spotted Honeyeaters, Little scrub Wren, [illegible] Pied [illegible] Caterpillar eaters also noted. Numbers of old nesting mounds of Scrub Turkey, or Scrub Hens noted. [illegible] within [illegible] yds [illegible] them; a mangy looking [illegible].

[illegible] scrub & into forest country. [illegible] grass very thick & high, [illegible] from ground. Timber [illegible] & Pandanus. [illegible] seen, further on I found a nest containing 4 eggs [illegible] from ground [illegible] branch. Watched for some time [illegible] not come along. [illegible] another [illegible] nest [illegible] could not find the bird. [illegible] eggs [illegible] return [illegible]. On way [illegible] flushed from nest containing

small - wing. Nest placed in top of Pandanus
which is unusual position. Fairy & [illegible]
Swiftlets, Blue Flycatchers, Orange & brown
[illegible] noted in forest country. Along the beach
a pair of Kingfishers White Flycatchers & [illegible]
small black crested [illegible] noted [illegible].
[illegible] the moon [illegible] was partially eclipsed
[illegible] about an hour [illegible] wore off.

Saturday 23rd, Up anchor & set sail at 5.50 a.m.
Head W.S.W for S E end of Santo Island, 300
miles distant. Judging by the winds we
have had coming down the coast, we reckon
it will take about 70 hours to do this run.
Moderate S E breeze. 10 am Breeze has taken
up a bit. 2 p.m Tropic bird noted, it circled
round the boat a couple of times & then
flew off out of sight to the South. 3 p.m. 2
Brown Gannets noted, also another that
was resting on the water. Small brown
Butterfly comes heading North 4 pm 2
Tropic Birds with short white tail feathers
circled round boat a couple of times
& then flew off to the South. Pair of Frigate
Birds & Brown Gannet noted. Small bird
like a Fairy Martin flew past, my a [illegible]
but it was out of range. Small white
Butterfly passes to the North. 5 pm Brown
Gannet & a Tropic bird noted. Another white
Butterfly comes North. Just before sunset
a small Blue Butterfly [illegible]
to North. Breeze very light. 7 pm Breeze

[illegible] a bit. 9 pm Bogai & I take first watch of 3 hours. Several [illegible] [illegible] seen floating past. Relieved by [illegible] [illegible] round about midnight. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], a Bito for next watch, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Sunday 24th. 6 am Relieve Eric & Malecki. Breeze [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]. Breeze [illegible] a [illegible] [illegible] midday. Brown Gannet & a Tropic bird [illegible] between 2 & 3 pm. 9 pm Bogai & I take first watch. Breeze steady. Nothing of note. Midnight, call Jackson & Bito. Breeze holding steady.

Monday 25th. 6 am Relieve Eric & Malecki. Breeze [illegible] steady from midnight on. 10 am land sighted. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] than we thought. Several flocks of [illegible] [illegible] seen [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] small [illegible] Gannet tried to alight on the boat. By midday we were within a mile of the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] miles [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] from the wind, go in a [illegible] [illegible] miles [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible]. [illegible]

on the [illegible] must [illegible]
out [illegible] and go ashore. The
clump of Timber [illegible] a few small
trees [illegible] in a [illegible] swamp at
the foot of the Sandhills. [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] also [illegible]
[illegible] Friar birds & Barred [illegible]
[illegible] plentiful. 1 Great [illegible] bird
[illegible] Caterpillar eaters & Northern [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
a few Friar birds seen about the sandhills
[illegible]. At [illegible] a little Green Pigeon
flushed from the bushes on a sandhill &
flew into clump of Timber around the swamp
could not [illegible] it again. Weather looks
[illegible] rain squalls passing to
the North. [illegible] around with the
[illegible]. Smoke of several fires can be seen
away inland apparently along South west.

Tuesday 26th. Up anchor & set sail at sunrise. Decide to go around the southern end of island & examine the small inlets [illegible]. There are many large colonies [illegible] on many of them. Have to [illegible] a couple of times to get out of the way of the breeze [illegible] to the eastward. Hundreds of birds [illegible] over the first small inlet that we came to. We [illegible] & [illegible], finding a [illegible]. The birds are all Caspian Terns, only a few nests were found in holes in the rock & under matted clumps of coarse grass, all contained half fledged young. The rock is coral conglomerate on top [illegible] & under way again. Pass another small inlet with numbers of Caspian Terns flying over it, too much of a [illegible] distance [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] A small flock of Grampus

& a few Crested Terns seen on some rocks near the shore & a pair of Ospreys & a White bellied Sea eagle seen circling round the island. A number of Turtle tracks could be seen on the small strip of sand beach. Too stormy to have a look around. The island is a rugged & tumbled mass of [illegible] with [illegible] growing among the rocks & little clumps of [illegible] growing in the [illegible] with a few high [illegible]. A few [illegible] [illegible]

Thursday [illegible]. Up anchor & set sail at sun rise. Light S E breeze, but weather looks as if it is going to be bad. A couple of miles along the coast, a canoe manned by 2 natives put out from a small sheltered bay to intercept us. They came alongside but could not speak any English, could not find out if there was any fresh water about the bay, so we put in to have a look round. Gave the natives a tow in; when we got inside the bay they cast off, made for a small sandy (?) beach inside a rocky point, beached the canoe & made off over the sandhills. The [illegible] went off in the dinghy

Landed where the natives left the canoe.
The canoe was 17 ft long 2 ft 6 in wide by
2 ft deep, double ended & cut from a
single log, a piece of copper tacked over
a hole in the stern & a couple of strips
of wood fastened over cracks on side
& bottom with wire & copper nails of
various sizes, also a iron nail in the
stern. The point of rock here is quartzite
[illegible] & hollowed into caves by
the waves. Tracks & dung of Rock Wallabies
everywhere. Go along to the sand edges
& follow the tracks of the natives about
300 yds to the shore of another small bay
could not see the natives anywhere.
Have a bit of a walk around inland
country very poor; sand hills & [illegible]
near beach & stony ridges further inland
with sparse growth of stunted bushes
& spinifex, which had only just been
burnt off. 2 birds only, [illegible]
[illegible] & a Pardalote. Heavy rain squall
coming up so go on board & wait till
it passes. Natives came back, got their
canoe & paddled along to a big [illegible]
[illegible] further up the bay & pulled it
up above high water mark; then sat down
under a tree opposite where the boat
was anchored. Went ashore & tried to talk
to them. Could not make them understand
the simplest signs. Afterwards I found
[illegible] of them were [illegible] & [illegible]

gave them a bit of Tobacco, so got brave and set sail again. Breeze very light with [illegible] squalls. About 4 miles further on a bunch of birds could be seen hovering over a small island. Sailed up into the [illegible], put the dinghy over & I got ashore. Went in pair of shorts & a hat, for it looked like a wet landing, as there was a heavy swell breaking on the small patch of sand beach, got ashore without having to swim. The birds were nearly all Crested Tern & were breeding freely. A good few Silver Gulls & Caspian Tern & a pair of Ospreys also noted. The island is a mass of [illegible] rock with spinifex & a few low bushes here & there in clefts amongst the rocks. An old nest of the Osprey was noticed on top of a rock on the highest part of the island. A Silver Gulls nest with 2 eggs was found under a ledge of rock. The eggs of the Crested Tern were laid on bare patches of rock & on bare soil amongst the Spinifex. Picked out a dozen or so of these & the eggs with [illegible] for eating, boarded the dinghy again & got on board again. Breeze still very light. However at [illegible] miles beyond Low is. The native would [illegible] on shore. About 4 pm he came alongside in a canoe, after I gave him a bit & [illegible] him for the shore again.

Thursday 28th. Up anchor & set sail at sunrise. Moderate S.E. breeze. Keep well out from shore as the water appeared to be shallow. Country very barren looking along here; all Sandhills, sparsely covered with vegetation. Caught a fine Barracouta about 15 lbs weight on the troll line. A little later we hooked another big fish, but a 7 ft shark took it as we were hauling it in. Round the S.W. corner of island about midday [illegible] a good way here. A few miles round the corner, the country is improving & appears to be more fertile. Belts of mangroves, openings seen in the mangroves, probably the [illegible] small creeks marked [illegible] water appears to be pretty shallow [illegible] in shore. Rough looking squalls working up from S.E. Canoe ahead with [illegible] natives [illegible] soon came up with them, all young men, a mile ahead another canoe with 4 natives [illegible] big squalls strikes us just as we come up with them, so we round up & anchor as if to [illegible] alongside, all young men [illegible] turtle. A couple of [illegible] wooden fish spears. [illegible] for spearing turtle or Dugong. 1/2 a dozen spear shafts; the

quantity of flint heads, belonging to the shafts were each wrapped in paper bark & done up in a neat parcel, stowed carefully in the stern of canoe. Also a hollow stick 3 ft 6 in long 1½ in diameter at small end 2 in diameter large end. This is evidently used as a signal horn; one of the natives put the smaller end to his lips & produced a deep booming note. The natives were clean & well built, some with a long tuft of beard on the chin, & wearing a bark girdle with a narrow strip of cloth or a bunch of fibre in front & behind, wristlet & armlets of either beads or cane. None could speak or understand English, but they all knew what tobacco was. Gave them some & they paddled off to the shore. A number of small boys & men could be seen along the shore. A little later 8 of them came off in a canoe, bringing a few pairs of turtle shell, for which they wanted tobacco. Gave them a couple of sticks & made signs for them to go ashore & stay there as it was just about dark. They went off making signs that they would come aboard again in the morning.